



ECEAP

WASHINGTON STATE'S



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
AND
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Preschool for low-income and at-risk children in Washington State

ECEAP and Head Start Serve Washington State

ECEAP and the federal Head Start program each offer community-based, comprehensive preschool services to children and families in poverty. Both programs have similar high quality standards, but Head Start's funding has grown significantly over the last ten years while ECEAP has lost ground as expenses for both programs soar. There are a few key differences in program design that make it easier for ECEAP to serve more rural and remote areas of the state. Here are some relevant facts:

- ◆ In 1991, Head Start statewide average funding per child and family enrollment slot was six percent higher than ECEAP's funding for comparable services and standards; by 2001, Head Start had 65 percent more average funding per slot. This funding gap has allowed Head Start programs to maintain the duration and intensity of their services while ECEAP has been forced to cut back.
- ◆ Both programs combined served only 60 percent of the estimated 32,078 eligible three- and four-year old children statewide in 2001, given enrollment levels of 7,313 for ECEAP and an estimated 12,000 for Head Start, including Migrant/Seasonal Head Start and American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start.
- ◆ 19 ECEAP contractors also administer separate Head Start programs, some with sites in different locations and some with different classrooms at the same site.
- ◆ Head Start requires local programs to provide matching funds and in-kind donations equalling 25 percent of the federal grant [1301.20]. ECEAP does not require a match, but does encourage programs to develop local collaborations and seek additional funds and in-kind donations. In 2001, ECEAP in-kind funds averaged almost 30 percent of the state allocation.
- ◆ Head Start center-based programs have a recommended minimum enrollment of 13 children per class [1306.32(a)(7)]. ECEAP programs have no such minimum, and have more flexibility in how and when services are to be delivered over a program year. This allows ECEAP to serve rural and remote parts of the state such as Lincoln and Adams counties and the Northeast Tri-County area where Head Start cannot serve small populations as cost-effectively.

ECEAP: Ready to Succeed!